SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

105th Congress — June 27, 1997, 11:20 am
1st Session — **Vote No. 145** — Page S-6677 Temp. Record

TAXPAYER RELIEF ACT/Excess Mandatory Spending

SUBJECT: **Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 . . . S. 949. Brownback motion to waive the Budget Act for the consideration of the Brownback/Kohl amendment No. 570.**

ACTION: MOTION REJECTED, 57-43

SYNOPSIS: As reported, S. 949, the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997, will provide net tax relief of $76.8 billion over 5 years and $238 billion over 10 years. The cost will be more than offset by the economic dividend ($355 billion over 10 years) that will result from balancing the budget in fiscal year (FY) 2002. This bill will enact the largest tax cut since 1981 and the first tax cut since 1986. It will give cradle-to-grave tax relief to Americans: it will give a $500-per-child tax credit, education tax relief, savings and investment tax relief, retirement tax relief, and estate tax relief. Over the first 5 years, approximately three-fourths of the benefits will go to Americans earning $75,000 or less. It will eliminate a third of the increased tax burden imposed by the 1993 Clinton tax hike, which was the largest tax hike in history.

The Brownback/Kohl amendment would require the Director of the Congressional Budget Office to submit a report to Congress within 30 days of enactment of this Act listing the projected direct (mandatory) spending targets for each of fiscal years 1998-2002. Each budget submitted by the President would provide a review of direct spending and receipts, including total outlays for programs covered by the direct spending targets and actual and projected outlays for each of the 5 succeeding fiscal years. It would also provide information on the major categories of Federal receipts. If the information provided showed that prior year direct spending exceeded the applicable target, or that the current year spending was projected to exceed the target, the President would be required to recommend: specific legislative changes to recoup or eliminate the overage; specific legislative changes to recoup or eliminate part of the overage, accompanied by a specific explanation of why only part should be eliminated; or no legislative changes, accompanied by a specific explanation of why no action should be taken. If the President recommended a full or partial elimination of excess spending, Congress would consider the recommendation under reconciliation procedures. A point of order would lie against any budget resolution considered by Congress that did not fully eliminate any overage. The point of order could be waived by a three-fifths majority (60) vote. The amendment would apply for fiscal years 1998 through 2002.

(See other side)

YEAS (57)			NAYS (43)			NOT VOTING (0)	
Republicans		**Democrats**	**Republicans**	**Democrats**		**Republicans**	**Democrats**
(55 or 100%)		**(2 or 4%)**	**(0 or 0%)**	**(43 or 96%)**		**(0)**	**(0)**
Abraham	Hutchinson	Kohl		Akaka	Inouye		
Allard	Hutchison	Robb		Baucus	Johnson		
Ashcroft	Inhofe			Biden	Kennedy		
Bennett	Jeffords			Bingaman	Kerrey		
Bond	Kempthorne			Boxer	Kerry		
Brownback	Kyl			Breaux	Landrieu		
Burns	Lott			Bryan	Lautenberg		
Campbell	Lugar			Bumpers	Leahy		
Chafee	Mack			Byrd	Levin		
Coats	McCain			Cleland	Lieberman		
Cochran	McConnell			Conrad	Mikulski		
Collins	Murkowski			Daschle	Moseley-Braun		
Coverdell	Nickles			Dodd	Moynihan		
Craig	Roberts			Dorgan	Murray		
D'Amato	Roth			Durbin	Reed		
DeWine	Santorum			Feingold	Reid		
Domenici	Sessions			Feinstein	Rockefeller		
Enzi	Shelby			Ford	Sarbanes		
Faircloth	Smith, Bob			Glenn	Torricelli		
Frist	Smith, Gordon			Graham	Wellstone		
Gorton	Snowe			Harkin	Wyden		
Gramm	Specter			Hollings			
Grams	Stevens						
Grassley	Thomas						
Gregg	Thompson						
Hagel	Thurmond						
Hatch	Warner						
Helms							

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:
1—Official Business
2—Necessarily Absent
3—Illness
4—Other

SYMBOLS:
AY—Announced Yea
AN—Announced Nay
PY—Paired Yea
PN—Paired Nay

Compiled and written by the staff of the Republican Policy Committee—Larry E. Craig, Chairman

The amendment was offered after all debate time had expired. However, by unanimous consent, some debate was permitted. Following debate, Senator Lautenberg raised the point of order that the amendment violated section 313(b)(1)(A) of the Budget Act. Senator Brownback then moved to waive the Budget Act for the consideration of the amendment. Generally, those favoring the motion to waive favored the amendment; those opposing the motion to waive opposed the amendment.

NOTE: A three-fifths majority (60) vote is required to waive the Budget Act. After the vote, the point of order was upheld and the amendment thus fell.

Those favoring the motion to waive contended:

This bipartisan amendment would require three-fifths majority votes before Congress would be allowed to exceed the direct spending caps it promises in this bill that it will meet, and it would also require the President's budget proposals to meet those spending caps or explain why they were being exceeded. The amendment would not require any sequester; it would simply force Congress to address any spending that occurred in excess of expectations. Without this amendment, the enforcement mechanisms in this bill will not stop any amount of excessive new mandatory spending, and deficits may consequently soar. We should guard against that result if we are truly determined to balance the budget. We should support this amendment.

Those opposing the motion to waive contended:

This amendment would essentially cap spending on programs like Medicare and Medicaid if they grew faster than projected. We should not impose an arbitrary cap because in some instances spending increases are justified. For instance, we just passed a proposal to provide health insurance to currently uninsured children, with the clear intention that many of those children will be covered under Medicaid. Medicaid spending will therefore go up. Under this amendment, Congress could not pass such new spending programs for the next 5 years unless it came up with offsetting spending cuts or unless it could get three-fifths majority votes to waive the Budget Act. As we see it, this amendment would force cuts in Medicare, Medicaid, and similar programs. We therefore oppose the motion to waive the Budget Act for its consideration.